

Provincial Politics

SPEECHES

OF

Hon. A. Turgeon

MINISTER OF LANDS
AND FORESTS



DELIVERED AT

**St. Michel of Bellechasse
and Longueuil**

IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER, 1907

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SPEECH OF HON. A. TURGEON

DELIVERED AT
St. Michel, County of Bellechasse

ON
AUGUST 18, 1907

(Translation)

There is only one saint in the calendar of the Conservative party to-day, and that is Saint Scandal. It was a favorite pastime with the Conservative party to invent scandals. These tactics were not new, and all the prominent and most respected Liberal leaders had in turn been the victims of such tactics. For instance, all would remember the campaign in the press against Mr. Joly in 1879, when the Conservative newspapers brought as many as thirty-eight charges of scandal against him, which did not prevent Mr. Joly de Lotbiniere from leaving behind him the reputation of an honest man who had been justly called the knight without fear and without reproach. As for Mercier, the events of 1892 were too recent to need recalling. Day after day, the Conservative press poured forth on the Liberals torrents of abuse, atrocious calumnies and shameless falsehoods.

BITTER MEMORY RECALLED

BY PRESENT DAY TACTICS.

From one end of the country to the other, from Pontiac to Gaspé, the Liberals were represented as thieves who were about to ruin public credit, and tarnish the honor of the Province, and once the elections were over, their leaders, especially Mercier, were destined to rot in jail. At that time an Attorney-General affixed his signature to an indictment for embezzlement when he had in his department and in his own office the official manifest proof of the judicious and legiti-

mate expenditure of the moneys in question.

And now that Mercier is dead, descended to the grave, wounded by their hands, the Conservatives and some false Liberals amongst his persecutors have the incredible audacity to pronounce his name with praise and speak of his memory tenderly and conciliatingly. These adversaries are always ready to render justice to the Liberal leaders—but only after their death. Woe to them while living!

Well, it is evident that I am not dead, but, on the contrary, very much alive. For several months past I have been the target of the Conservative party. Since the last Provincial session, L'Evenement and, following its lead, the smaller fry of the Conservative press, have undertaken a campaign against me as representative of Bellechasse. My public and sometimes my private life has been most severely assailed; old records and newspaper files have been unearthed and, because I had the honor of representing my country abroad with distinction, one writer, more abject than the others, sought to cast doubt on my literary honesty. Fortunately for me, I referred the matter to the Chairman of the Board of Management of L'Evenement, and he fully vindicated me from this charge.

REASONS FOR CALUMNY

CAMPAIGN RECOUNTED.

What is the reason for this campaign? There are general causes and particular reasons, general party considerations and motives of personal

animosity. At the close of the last Federal session, Senator Landry stated at Ottawa that I must be destroyed at all costs, as I am an element of strength to the Liberal party in the Quebec district. Senator Landry had even used a still more flattering expression, which for that reason I prefer to pass over in silence. Such is the general reason—the interest of the Conservative party; and it is the only one worthy of attention.

It is necessary, however, to mention the private reasons, because they threw an important light upon the methods and sincerity of Senator Landry. These reasons are connected with the question, which occupied the attention of the Legislature between 1892 and 1897, of the purchase by the Government of the Beauport Asylum. The Landry family were part owners of this and they had made a large fortune out of its wretched inmates. That purchase was the true cause of the coup d'état of December, 1891. In the interest of the unfortunate inmates and of the public, Mercier had decided not to renew the contract, which was a scandalous one, but to erect a hospital worthy of the Province and of modern science. This led Messrs. Angers and Landry to strike their great blow. I was then a member of the House and, with others, strongly denounced the scandal. We placed Mr. Landry on the horns of a dilemma from which he has never cleared himself—from which I defy him to-day to clear himself. He had, as curator to his sick brother, valued the Asylum at \$270,000 in 1884, when it was in better condition and the contract had still nine years to run. Now, Mr. Landry either was an accomplice in despoiling one whom the law and the ties of kindred made it his duty to protect, or else the value fixed in 1884 was correct and thus, in 1893, the Province of Quebec paid from \$150,000 to \$200,000 more than it should have paid. Is it surprising, therefore, after this disgraceful scandal, that anxiety for public weal has arisen in the soul of Senator Landry and that the unworthiness of the member for Bellechasse has moved the scribes of *L'Evenement*, wherein you will find the inspiration, the methods of the worst black sheep in the Conservative ranks, among men whose names have been connected with acts of political brigandage during the past quarter of a century?

A FOREIGNER SENT BY THE CURSE OF HEAVEN

No less interesting than the motives,

are the individuals chosen to do the work and the way in which they went about it. Two men were the principal actors in the trial which so inflamed the public mind not long ago. One of these, Lamont or Lemont, was an unfrocked ecclesiastic whom the Hon. Mr. Prevost picked up in the street, made him private secretary and then an officer of his department and who, from that ambush spied upon everything that occurred or imagined what had not occurred, wrote vile and lying articles in the *Nationaliste* against the man who gave him his daily bread. There you have Senator Landry's first collaborator. But there is another, no less illustrious but of different origin, who came from Europe. Gentlemen, the Baron de l'Epine's history is well-known. In 1902, Belgium dumped upon our shores, one of these foreigners whom the curse of heaven periodically sends us. It was my misfortune to meet him. He was a man of good family, possessed of education and tactful address, who looked miserable at Mr. Gigault's, where he was working as a farm hand at five dollars a week. I was filled with compassion for him, when I saw him striving so bravely to remake the fortune he had wasted in the old country. I have been blamed for having been so intimate with Baron de l'Epine, but surely I am not the first to be deceived by appearances, nor the first honest man to be duped by a rogue? Only my intimate friends knew what I did for that man, and yet it was that same man who for five years took notes of everything I did, collected everything I wrote, and sold it for so much a line, even those private and confidential letters which no honorable man should ever part with—who forged documents and mutilated others to destroy or dishonor me, his benefactor!

After this, who can say that the actors are unworthy of the piece and of its author, the man of the safe, the sympathetic Mr. Landry? It is true, the whole scheme might have been wrecked—there was the confession of Baron de l'Epine himself, in his evidence, and for a small position of \$50 a month his silence could have been purchased and his scruples quieted. Thank goodness, this was refused, and for my own part, when the bargain was submitted to me and a corner of the veil lifted from the conspiracy hatched against me, I replied that I might fall, but I would at least fall manfully and honorably."

JUDGE BOSSE'S CONDUCT IN ASSELIN TRIAL CRITICIZED

Mr. Turgeon proceeded to refer to the Asselin trial. He stated definitely that he had accepted the ruling of the court and the decision of the Montreal Bar in connection with his application, as acting Attorney-General, against Mr. Laflamme, and so "as he was concerned that incident was ended once and for all. "I have nothing whatever to say against the decision," he declared. He went in to deal with the evidence offered at the trial.

Two theories can be deduced from the evidence heard and the exhibits produced at the trial; one is the de l'Epine's version, made up of fiction, and the other is the true one which I will explain. According to the Baron's theory I was to receive from the Belgian syndicate on the purchase of of sale, a gift of 30 cents an acre or \$60,000, which was to go into the election fund.

Now upon what grounds is this charge based? When the political passions of the hour have quieted down, it will be found difficult to believe that a judge of thirty years' experience, presiding over a British court of justice governed by the British Criminal law, so careful of the honor and freedom of the subject, allowed the baron to produce, to give a color to his testimony, letters that were absolutely foreign to the case, letters that he had exchanged with fellow-countrymen of his own in Belgium, without first imposing on him the indispensable obligation of proving that in writing such letters he had acted as my mandatory or agent. It is a well-known maxim of criminal and civil law that a person cannot be held responsible for what is written by another unless it be proved that the latter wrote by order or with the authorization of the former. It is truly a shocking thing that either the negligence, or the political bias, of a judge, oblige me to enunciate such elementary principles of law, terrible that a judge should have allowed himself to be influenced to such an extent as to endanger the administration of justice.

THE CHARNEUSE LETTER AND STRIKING EVIDENCE.

The famous Charneuse letter of January, 1906, of which the Baron has produced a draft, has manifestly been written as an after-thought. The date was written in paler ink,

and the Baron was much embarrassed to explain the circumstances. Everything in this letter was redolent of fraud. Moreover, he had not dared to maintain to the end that the incriminating passage was in the original. He had already been caught in flagrant perjury before a committee of the House during last session, and had taken his precautions in case the original should turn up.

In his evidence Baron de l'Epine has replied to certain questions as follows:

Q.—You cannot now assert that the original you sent Mr. Turgeon was absolutely like this one?

A.—I cannot swear it was a press copy. I may have altered a word without altering the meaning. The meaning has not been altered, and I cannot remember whether there was even the slightest change.

Q.—You might have made an alteration while transcribing the letter you sent to the Hon. Mr. Turgeon. Something may have occurred to you which you may have added?

A.—It is possible.

Q.—Just as you may have left out something in the letter you sent Mr. Turgeon, some words you have inserted here?

A.—Nothing essential.

Q.—It is possible that something may have been struck out?

A.—Yes.

Q.—You cannot remember?

A.—No.

On the other hand, my evidence contains the following:

Q.—Mr. Turgeon, please state whether there was at any time any question of making the syndicate pay a higher amount than that which was to be received by the Province?

A.—No.

Q.—Do you remember having received at the beginning of February, 1905, from Baron de l'Epine, who was then in Belgium, a letter by which he informed you that he had given explanations regarding the C. E. (Election Fund), to four members of the syndicate, the question of the election fund?

A.—Never.

Q.—Will you take communication of a letter dated the 28th January, 1906, addressed to yourself and signed by Baron de l'Epine, and tell us whether you remember having received the original of that letter?

A.—I never had that letter. That letter is evidently a letter written afterwards to try and attack me.

Q.—Will you read the letter to the jury?

A.—Baron de l'Epine may have written a letter to me at that date, but I swear that neither in any letter of Baron de l'Epine nor in any conversation with him was there any question, directly or indirectly, of a sum to be paid by Baron de l'Epine or the syndicate into the Election Fund.

CHARGES BARON WITH AN ATTEMPT TO SWINDLE

It was not surprising, therefore, that Judge Bosse set aside that portion of the Baron's evidence which incriminated me, and read between the lines what is as clear as daylight to me, viz., that Baron de l'Epine, who had come out here to seek his fortune, had endeavored to swindle \$60,000 out of his Belgian associates and, the better to obtain his end, had alleged the political necessity of paying that amount into the election fund. This is manifest from the very facts, circumstances, correspondence and the Baron's own evidence. The Baron stated that the negotiations were broken off during Mr. De Jardin's last visit to Quebec at the beginning of November, 1906, because payment in cash of the \$60,000 was exacted while that gentleman offered only \$40,000. Both the date and the amount are important points to bear in mind. If the amount had been intended for me, and not for the Baron, how can it be explained that, in a letter of the previous 4th of July, the Baron proposed to the syndicate to pay the sum in two instalments, one half in 1906 and the other in 1907? Had the sum been intended for me, would not the Baron have spoken to me about it before making the proposition? And yet, the Baron stated in his evidence:

Q.—In your letter of the 4th July you said: "Will you tell me whether, with respect to the payments in the event of the affair going through, I may propose this; fifteen cents per acre to be paid in 1906 and fifteen cents per acre in 1907."

Had you any occasion to discuss this proposal to distribute the payment of the thirty cents over two years with anybody?

A.—I do not think so. No. I did it of my own accord, on my own responsibility. I was trying to negotiate matters."

This is a striking admission. Had the Baron been negotiating for me, he would, of course, have first obtained my consent, for in the month of July, as he himself has said, we met several times a day. Had he made the proposal without speaking to me, he must have been very sure of the person who was to receive the amount. Had the amount been for me, I would have spoken of it at least once to the only two members of the syndicate I have ever met—Mr. De Jardin of Antwerp, and Hon. Mr. Dubord, Legislative Councillor. The latter is one of my most intimate friends. Baron de l'Epine called him my alter ego. A sum of \$60,000 is a tidy one, especially for a man without a fortune, and ought to have given me much preoccupation, and yet, strange to say, throughout the whole of my correspondence, even my confidential correspondence, there is not a single word alluding to it. Although, during the fourteen or fifteen months the negotiations lasted, I met Mr. Dubord, my intimate friend, almost every day in Quebec. I have never spoken to him on the subject. How is it that Mr. De Jardin, the moving spirit of the syndicate, who came twice from Belgium to Quebec to negotiate the matter, has never said a word of it to me, even to complain that I was too exacting? Baron de l'Epine has been careful not to state that Mr. De Jardin and myself have spoken to one another about it, because he knew that Mr. De Jardin, a true gentleman, would have denied it. If I was one to drag confidential letters into a public debate, I could show what people in Belgium think of Baron de l'Epine. However, the truth will come out before long, and retribution has already begun.

SOME FORCIBLE ARGUMENTS

AND INSTRUCTIVE FACTS

If the sum had been intended for me, what explanation can be given of the fact that I imposed onerous conditions on the syndicate, so onerous that they cannot be compared with those imposed by previous governments under similar circumstances?

The letter granting the option in the month of December, 1905, reads as follows:—

"Baron de l'Epine, Quebec:

"Dear Mr. de l'Epine.—I have taken communication of your letter of the 28th November last respecting a concession of 200,000 acres of land in the northwest of the Province of Quebec, between the frontier line of the Pro-

vince of Quebec and Ontario and the 77th meridian west longitude, astride of the line of the Grand Trunk Pacific or in proximity to this railway.

"Your proposal is accepted as regards the principle, and you are given a six months' option to inspect the territory.

"The price is fixed at seventy cents per acre, payable in five yearly instalments of \$28,000 each.

"It is further agreed:

"1. That the cost of exploration and survey shall be borne by you, and the latter shall be carried out under instructions from my department.

"2. You will have a preferential right to purchase, at the equal price, all water powers of a lesser development than 1,500 horse-power. Falls of greater development can only be sold at public auction. The land required for operation of such water powers is expressly reserved.

"3. The merchantable timber shall be subject to the payment of the stumpage dues fixed by the regulations.

"4. You shall place under cultivation one-tenth of the land suitable for the same; establish at least thirty settlers in 1907 and seventy-five settlers in each subsequent year. The lots so granted shall not be more than 200 acres. Nevertheless, in default of settlers and for the time being, the grantee shall be deemed to have fulfilled his obligation by cultivating or causing to be cultivated the area of land above mentioned.

"The letters patent shall be issued as soon as the price of sale is paid and the settlement conditions fulfilled. Notwithstanding such issue, stumpage dues shall continue to be paid on the merchantable timber.

"This option is given to you personally and you cannot transfer it without the consent of the Minister of Lands and Forests.

(Signed) A. Turgeon."

During the subsequent negotiations, I told Mr. De Jardin that the Government might perhaps give way on some matters of detail, such as the cost of exploring and running the outer lines, but that it would be inflexible on the main points.

I am no novice in politics, and I am sufficiently familiar with the administrative history of the Province. I was especially aware of the conditions imposed by Conservative Governments under similar circumstances. Had I wished to negotiate this matter so as to get the graft of \$60,000,

could I not, unless I were a fool, have contented myself with the usual conditions established by the political opponents of the Government, so that they could not have reproached me? I have in hand copies of Orders-in-Council, by which the Governments since Confederation, and even before them, have granted lands in this Province. The authenticity of the documents could not be contested, and they will be laid before the House at the beginning of next session.

By an Order-in-Council of the 18th December, 1869, the Conservative Government granted 10,000 acres of land in Rolette and Panet at thirty cents an acre. By an Order-in-Council of the 25th May, 1870, the Conservative Government granted 11,000 acres in Charlevoix at twenty cents per acre. By an Order-in-Council of the 7th September, 1871, the Conservative Government granted 8,000 acres in Pohénégamook at twenty cents an acre. By an Order-in-Council of the 13th December, 1871, the Conservative Government granted 320,000 acres to the Franco-Canadian Company. As the settlement conditions had not been fulfilled within the prescribed delay, the privilege was extended. Order-in-Council passed in 1872, 1873, 1874, and even in January, 1877. The price in this case was twenty cents per acre. By an Order-in-Council of the 7th June, 1872, the Conservative Government granted 9,000 acres in Chavigny and Montcalm, for thirty cents per acre. By an Order-in-Council of the 22nd April, 1873, the Conservative Government granted land in the county of Temiscouata at thirty cents per acre. By an Order-in-Council of the 30th June, 1884, the Conservative Government granted 23,000 acres in the County of Chicoutimi at twenty cents per acre. In November, 1890, the Mercier Government granted 22,000 acres at twenty cents per acre.

More recently, on the 16th November, 1896, under the regime of the Conservative Government, a grant of land in the County of Lake St. John, was given for twenty cents per acre. There were even Orders-in-Council of the 4th March, 1864, and 13th March, 1868, granting land at ten cents per acre. A territory was sold to the Hon. Mr. Masson for ten cents an acre, while the regular price for lots in the same township was thirty cents. All the above grants had been made subject to the usual settlement conditions, but I am in a position to show that, at a much more recent date, under the Conservative Governments, from 1892 to 1897, lands have been sold to political favorites without settlement condi-

tions and at a lower price than that fixed by law and by the regulations.

POURS BITTER SCORN ON HIS CALUMINATORS.

There is still more, however, in the case I am now dealing with. Not only had I the prices fixed by all the Governments since 1867 to guide me, but I had also an Order-in-Council fixing the price of land in the various sections of the Province. Now in that Order the price fixed for lands in the Abitibi region was thirty cents per acre, for surveyed lands. I have in my hand a statement signed by Mr. Tache, the Deputy Minister of Crown Lands, showing that the cost of survey amounts to thirteen cents per acre. Therefore, while precedents and the law authorized me to sell to the Belgian syndicate surveyed lands at the price of thirty cents per acre, I, the election fund man, the man who wanted to get a graft of \$80,000, compelled them to pay, not thirty, not forty, nor fifty cents, but seventy, besides thirteen cents for surveys, or eighty-three cents in all!

Again, the law says that as soon as the settlement conditions are fulfilled and the price paid, the grantee becomes the incommutable owner of the land, owes nothing more to the Crown, and consequently can sell or cut the merchantable timber on his property without paying stumpage dues.

And I, the election fund man, the man denounced by L'Evenement as a criminal, I was so eager to give the grant to the Belgian syndicate that I first compelled them to pay eighty-three cents per acre, instead of thirty, and imposed upon them the further obligation that when their settlement conditions were fulfilled, the price paid in full, and they had become owners to all intents and purposes, they should still pay the large amount usually exacted as stumpage dues! Truly, the inventors of this story, they who have organized this scandal, must have looked upon the electors as very imbecile. People of good faith, the timid and suspicious—for there are individuals in all classes and in all parties who are ever ready to accept without inquiry the worst accusation against their leaders—will ask themselves shortly, in a few weeks when minds have become calmer and reflection has done its work, whether they have not been victims of hallucination, and how they could have been so led astray as to be uneasy for a single moment regarding a matter that had been so honorably managed by the

Government and every detail of which showed the jealous care taken to protect the public interests.

The impostor who fathered the charges has unmasked himself. After stating in the most categorical manner that negotiations had been broken off on account of the refusal of the syndicate to pay \$80,000 into the election fund, Baron de l'Epine was forced to admit the following in his cross-examination:

"You say the negotiations were broken off or that you did not come to an agreement with Mr. Turgeon with regard to the settlement conditions?"

"That is so."

"Mr. Turgeon wanted to have one-tenth cleared in three years?"

"I think those are the conditions imposed by law."

"You were not disposed to accept?"

"Not directly."

"And upon that you did not agree?"

"That is so."

"You wanted to impose this condition upon your settlers, but you did not want the Government to impose it upon the syndicate?"

"Yes."

"And it was upon this account that you did not come to an agreement?"

"Yes."

TWO UNIQUE LETTERS TO THE BARON DE L'EPINE.

Now, this admission of Baron de l'Epine was the confirmation of what I had maintained from the opening of the trial, namely, that the negotiations had been broken off wholly and solely on the clause relative to the settlement conditions. I had constantly told these gentlemen that I would never consent to grant more favorable conditions to a foreign syndicate than those imposed upon our own people; that we might perhaps extend the delay for the carrying out of the conditions, but that that clause should remain a *sine qua non* condition of the contract. This admission of Baron de l'Epine was, moreover, confirmed by a letter from one of the members of the syndicate, the Chevalier Goethals, addressed to l'Epine on the 29th January, 1907, and filed of record. That letter reads as follows:

"My dear Baron—I regret that your hasty departure prevented me from showing you a letter recently come to hand from Mr. Obalski to Mr. De Jardin. I did not have it at that mo-

ment at hand. Here is the principal passage: "I have seen the Minister, who told me that he wrote to the Baron respecting the Abittibi. He submitted the question of the settlement conditions to the Crown Law officers who stated that it could not be legally ignored. He is studying the question of special legislation to be laid before Parliament, but he fears that it may not be popular and that it may be rejected."

"If my forecast be correct and come to pass, the Abittibi affair will not be carried out, that's all. And this will be all the worse."

"You see, my dear baron, it is greatly to be regretted that the Canadian Government could not or would not transact on the spot on that untoward, unique, and last clause, while Mr. DeJardin was at Quebec in the month of November last. At that time, if they could have come to an agreement, Mr. DeJardin would have signed in the name of the Syndicate and the thing would have been done."

"At present we are undoubtedly still ready to sign and close the transaction, of course on the conditions mentioned, upon which we will not yield, because it is a question of 'to be or not to be.' I clearly perceive, however, that each day that passes removes here a portion of the goodwill manifested at the start."

"They are beginning to ask if the Canadian Government seriously desires to put the affair through. And in all truth, there is room for doubt. For, in a word, what did your honorable Ministers come to Belgium for—during and since the Liege Exhibition? To get Belgians and Franco-Belgian capital, said they. Well, we offer them both, fully and entirely. Why, then, is not the affair put through. For our part, we have, since September, 1905, constituted a syndicate for the study of Canadian affairs, and have already spent in the Province of Quebec, over 35,000 francs. We have given pledges; but on the Canadian side, what have we met with thus far? Promises, words, and that is all. Is this serious?"

"I ask myself if your honorable Ministers know the men with whom they are dealing, and if they have sought information on the subject? Let us remind them that, in three years, our group has created in Egypt only four new institutions, namely, the 'Caisse Hypothecaire d'Egypte,' the 'Compagnie Agricole du Nil,' the 'Societe Generale Egyptienne,' and the 'Societe Agricole et Industrielle d'E-

gypte,' and that these four concerns, which are working splendidly, have absorbed both in bonds and stock, 110,250,000 francs, of which 98,000,000 francs have been paid up."

"With regard to the Canadian West, tell them that, in April last, the same group organized La Cie Immobiliere et Agricole Canadienne, with a paid-up capital of 3,000,000 francs, besides 4,000,000 francs of bonds; a total of 7,000,000 francs paid in a few months. Tell them also that on Thursday the same group organized la Cie Hypothecaire Canadienne with a capital of 10,000,000 francs and a bond issue of 20,000,000 francs to follow shortly afterwards, a good portion of which is already taken up. This makes a fresh total of some thirty millions of good Belgian money, brought into your Canadian West in the space of three years. And what is becoming of your East during that time?"

"Do your honorable Ministers hope that it will be easy to find capitalists elsewhere who can dispose of millions as easily?"

"Those honorable Ministers proclaimed here publicly that, for Canada, no settler is as good as the Belgian settler. Well, we are bringing these also, and first-class ones at that."

"But, for reasons that are known to you, we wish to keep our hands free. Is it so difficult to come to an understanding on this point?"

"You are aware that I am one of the four members of the Board of Directors. I can therefore guarantee that what I tell you here thoroughly represents the impressions and very decided dispositions of the said Board and of the whole syndicate."

"You, who know, partially at least, the strong ties between our group of Antwerp people and those of Brussels and Paris, will readily understand the regrettable notoriety that will be attached to the failure of our Abittibi affair in the event of such failure being attributable to unwillingness on the part of the Quebec Government."

"The honorable Ministers have here, in various public speeches, promised Belgians the aid and protection of their government."

"To us they further promised to treat us as associates. This word of the Hon. Mr. Turgeon is textual and he himself will remember it."

"Well, if in consequence of such lack of promised aid and protection, the Abittibi affair were to fall through, the result, you must admit, would not tally with the promises

made in Belgium and recorded by the press.

"And I repeat, the echoes of this venture will for many years destroy the good effect of.....and inflict upon the government prestige of the East a blow of which its rivals will not fail to avail themselves against it.

"I still hope that Mr. Obalski has wrongly interpreted the Minister's words, etc.

"(Signed) Chevallier Goethals.

"Member of the Board of Directors of the Syndicate for the study of Canadian affairs."

It would be interesting to cite another letter of Chevallier Goethals to Baron de l'Epine. It shows that the latter confided matters to him and will enable you to understand the immense interest he took in bringing the matter to a conclusion. It reads as follows:

"Antwerp, 1st January, 1907.

"My Dear Baron.—Thanks for your good wishes. On my part I heartily reciprocate them. May the year 1907 be a successful one for you beyond your hopes, and largely compensate you and yours for your disappointments of 1906.

"I learn with pleasure, my dear friend, that your health is improving and that you hope to re-embark for Quebec on the 15th of this month. Your presence there is absolutely necessary, both on your own account and on ours. We are about to attain our end. Another push, and we get there.

"Those gentlemen are all disposed to carry out the matter. They feel that the wind sets in the direction of Canada, and they are trimming their sails in that direction. There is no lack of capital.

"The proof is that in a fortnight, the Jacobs' house will organize La Banque Hypothecaire Canadienne, with a capital of ten millions; the capital is already subscribed far beyond that sum, and even now there will have to be a proportionate reduction in the subscriptions. I shall be the commissioner in the matter. The list of directors is a splendid one. This is the second Canadian company organized by the Jacobs in ten months. They do not ask better than to start another soon. It is necessary, dear friend, you understand, that this one must be yours. The psychological moment has come; do not allow the iron to cool; strike while it is hot. Things must be pushed, and it is important that you should convince your Canadian Ministers of this.

"And do not forget, dear friend, that on the day when the matter is put through, your shares in the Syndicate, which to-day are worth nothing, will at once acquire an immediately negotiable value. It was you who suggested that matter. On your statements and on my intervention a syndicate was formed, it followed you; in so doing it has already spent a good deal of money. On that score, my dear baron, you have assumed a moral responsibility from which you have no right to relieve yourself, although you are not appointed directly, as you yourself object without its answering anything. In your interest, therefore, as well as in ours, it is necessary, we are in accord on this point, I think, that the affair must be carried through as promptly as possible. May 1907 be in this respect a memorable date for us.

"Previous to your departure it will be indispensable that we should have another interview. Please name a day sufficiently long beforehand so that I may make my arrangements accordingly.

"Please give my best New Year's wishes and respectful compliments to the baroness and believe me, my dear friend,

"Yours truly,

"(Signed) Chevallier Goethals."

THE VINDICATION IS

DRIVEN FINALLY HOME.

What then remains of the whole charge? Nothing but Baron de l'Epine's statement. What credit should be given to his testimony? Had you been jurors you would have set it aside with contempt. Here was a man who pretended to be a Catholic, who travelled with a certificate from his Bishop in his pocket, and who not once, not twice, nor thrice, but on five, eight or ten different occasions at Quebec, Kamouraska, Murray Bay, in the County of Terrebonne, ridiculed the idea of there being a God, a future life and eternal punishment, and who pushed his blasphemous negations still further, even denying the existence of a conscience — that sovereign judge, whom everyone bears in his own breast, and declaring that these are all myths invented by the priests to make capital for themselves, or, in other words, to live at the expense of the popular credulity! It was upon the evidence of this man that the great Christians of L'Evenement, the men who posed in the past as the defenders of the Church, whom nobody

was attacking, and who have lived politically on the exploiting of the religious sentiments of our population, have built up their scandal. Judge Bosse was more just and, in spite of his habitual ill-will and the singular spirit which he displayed on this trial, recommended the jury to set aside everything that related to me, as nothing had been proved against me, saying that the trial had left me, as far as any act of personal corruption is concerned, perfectly untouched. My conscience had no need of this tribute, but, on account of its origin and its author, I claim the right to set it up against my accusers. Sound and independent opinion has in consequence given me thus far the benefit of the doubt.

MR. TURGEON LASHES THE CONSERVATIVE BLACK SHEEP

The great newspapers, the industrial and financial reviews have, as was their right, demanded from the Prime Minister more light on the subject by means of a thorough and searching investigation on the point at issue. That investigation will be held, and, if nobody has the courage to demand it, the government will compel it. We have the Premier's formal assurance to this effect.

This declaration has reassured public opinion, but there remain two groups who will not lay down their arms. One of these groups centres in L'Evenement and the other in Le Nationaliste. The latter is less guilty than the former because it is directed by a sick man—a neurasthenic, who only seeks notoriety, and whom I pity. I do not attach much importance to Le Nationaliste, though when they kept on calling me a perjurer I took legal action to stop them. In L'Evenement, however, have taken refuge all the black sheep of the Conservative party, in the district of Quebec, men who have left the shreds of their reputations on all the brambles by the wayside, who have been mixed up with all the scandals, who have been caught with their hands in every pocket, who have been the pensioners and partners of the Whelans and the McGreevys, and who are detected by their own friends as they are despised by their adversaries.

In the eyes of these men I will find no grace or no respite, but in all my troubles I have the supreme consolation of knowing that I have the confidence of my electors and the warm sympathy of my native county. It is with legitimate pride that I regard

this attitude of my constituents, whom I thank from the bottom of my heart for the atmosphere of trust and affection with which they have ever surrounded me. Nor can I recall without emotion the welcome given to me by the population of Quebec on the evening of the 19th July, on the return of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. It is in the Ancient Capital, my adopted city, that my adversaries and myself live, and the welcome, or rather the ovation extended to me was meant less for myself as a man than for the principles I represent, for the Liberals of the Ancient Capital have a tenacious memory and remember the events of 1892, recognizing the immensity of the mistake that has been made on that occasion and deeply repenting it. The spectacle was a truly touching one, and none has felt it more exclusively than I have.

LIBERALS FUSED TOGETHER IN HARMONIOUS UNION

Yes, the Liberals remember, and it is right that it should be so; for people soon forget in politics, and public indifference is the worst of evils. It is right that it should be so, in order that the historian of the future should not write of our country what Plutarch relates of Greece. When Themistocles' father wished to divert his son from public life, he took him to the shore of the Piræus and showed him an old abandoned galley, saying: "Thus does the people treat its orators and chiefs." Yes, the people remember, and consequently they watch.

It is the same in political as in the physical world; in the days of the agitation and storm, the depths are moved and the scum rises to the surface, but the scum of 1907 will not meet with the same success as in days gone by. On the contrary, by their bad faith, by their belittling campaign, by their appeal to every evil instinct, our adversaries have performed the feat of putting an end to dissensions in the Liberal ranks; and if, to-day, the Liberal party is, from one end of the country to the other, fused together in harmonious union, this is due in a great measure to our adversaries who brought about the formation of a league against them which nothing can dissolve or force down. They have brought about the coalition of threatened material interests, the social concord of alarmed and indignant consciences, and against such a coalition of the material and moral interests of the country, the mountebank jests of Senator Landry would not avail.

I would have liked to say a word about the criticisms against the administration of the Crown Lands Department, but I have already spoken too long, and am also too tired to take up the subject. I will, however, have occasion before long to again meet the electors of the district. I assert positively that such criticisms are due solely to ignorance of the facts, and, in some instances, to bad faith. To quote one instance only, it was stated on the hustings that after a dinner with Mr. Breakey at the Garrison Club, I have sold him on credit, under the upset price and for \$105,000, a timber limit, which Mr. Breakey has sold some months afterwards for \$800,000. As a matter of fact, there has been no dinner at any club, no conversation with Mr. Breakey, either directly or indirectly, and no sale on credit; for Mr. Breakey has given his note, which has been discounted at the bank and afterwards paid. It was equally untrue that Mr. Breakey has resold for the alleged

amount or for anything like it. Such is the good faith with which men, who claim to be in earnest, such as Mr. Bourassa, discuss public matters. Papineau's grandson is reduced to repeating Mr. Leblanc's quibbles. That sale to Mr. Breakey was made openly, before from 250 to 300 persons, managers or presidents of lumbering companies, and, according to law, adjudged to the highest bidder.

GREAT DEMONSTRATION

OF PUBLIC FEELING.

Mr. Turgeon concluded his speech by thanking the Prime Minister, who had recently, and even that very day, he said, given him proofs of his confidence and friendship; his colleagues in the Ministry and among the members; the Liberals of the Ancient Capital and of the surrounding counties; and finally his worthy electors of the county of Bellechasse.



SPEECH

OF

HON. A. TURGEON

DELIVERED AT

Longueuil, County of Chambly

III

SEPTEMBER 22, 1907

(Translation)

I have accepted with pleasure the invitation to accompany the Prime Minister for the purpose of discussing questions of provincial politics. Of late, many persons have raised their voices in the press, but more particularly on the hustings, some to blame and others to approve, some to defend and others to assail the present regime. Among its critics are old acquaintances, singing the same old songs, but their ranks have been increased by two or three recruits who are introducing some new notes into the music. You have read these indictments, you have heard some of them; but really there is no occasion for alarm. Set aside the fault-finding in matters of detail, the criticisms in matters of execution, the artfulness of language and a few flashes of oratorical fire; clear up especially two or three questions of fact which have been odiously distorted and misrepresented, and the conclusion is irresistible that within the last ten years, the Liberal Government has done nothing to forfeit popular confidence.

These critics are made up of two groups, the old guard under the command of Mr. LeBlanc, and a squad of franc-tireurs led by Mr. Bourassa. These men, hitherto divided by their political battles, their past and their traditions, are now united by the bond of a common hatred, and are pursuing the same object—the overthrow of Mr. Gouin at Quebec, in order to realize their great ulterior aim, which is to

weaken Sir Wilfrid Laurier at Ottawa. As for Mr. LeBlanc, if recriminations are worth anything, if life were not too short to be constantly raking up a dead past, never to be resuscitated, it would be easy, by merely recalling the history of the Conservative administrations from 1892 to 1897, to ascertain whether these gentlemen have always lived up to the lofty principles which they are now preaching.

With regard to Mr. Bourassa, who is the bigger hypocrite, his tactics are more dangerous. What should be thought of his attitude? I am one of those who have to some extent esteemed and even admired Mr. Bourassa in the past. Mr. Bourassa has often advocated doctrines with which I do not sympathize, and on two or three occasions he has manifested an extremely rebellious spirit, which I can not approve, because the art of Government is not the pursuit of the ideal and of ultimate perfection, but rather to find the best possible solution in the midst of conflicting ideas and clashing passions. The doctrines, and Mr. Bourassa is one of these, take no account of the reality of things, of what is, but rather of what should be, and for that reason on two or three occasions I had found Mr. Bourassa clearly unjust towards Sir Wilfrid Laurier. But the note he sounded was at least a lofty one, and his motives seemed to be disinterested. Why has he held it to be his duty to step down from this pedestal upon which his admirers had placed him, to

become the champion of no one knows what incoherent doctrine in which bad faith vies too frequently with ignorance. For the moment, Mr. Bourassa is no longer a politician, but an apostle, a Moses, "a man who treads the waves," whom an awkward, but perhaps prophetic friend has compared to Marcelin Albert, who recently, for a moment, raised a revolt in the South of France, but who was quickly brought to his proper level by the common sense of the people. If Mr. Bourassa was a reformer, he should be mistrusted, for there is nothing more dangerous than such men, and nothing more costly than their experiments. There were half a dozen of them in 1892, and it had taken ten years of hard work to repair the ruins strewed along their path.

WHAT NEW IDEAL HAS MR. BOURASSA ADVOCATED?

What new ideal has Mr. Bourassa advocated? What serious reform has he proposed? All the possible and desirable reforms which he favors have been already realized by the government. As for the remainder, they are only manifestations of childishness, absurd or burlesque propositions, and sometimes demagogic appeals, such as the handing over of the timber to the settler and the abandonment of our wealth in fish and game to the improvidence of the masses. One feels at once that Mr. Bourassa has no administrative experience, no idea of business. His policy is a policy elaborated or rather dreamt of, at the fire side, and he does not take into account the reality of things.

Again, if Mr. Bourassa had stopped there; if he had confined himself to preaching unrealizable or even damaging reforms, we might question his judgment without withdrawing from him our esteem, but he has deemed it proper—in order to attain what object and to gratify what ambition, none can tell—to repeat two or three silly pieces of gossip on every hustings in the Province, without first seeking to satisfy himself as to their authenticity and to continue to repeat these even when shown that they are false. Truly this is a strange country of ours! When a charge is made against a public man, not only does the accuser regard himself under no obligation to prove it, not only does he not consider himself bound to establish the guilt of the accused, but it is the public man who has to show his innocence.

What can be thought of the good faith of a man like Mr. Bourassa, when he asserts that the Government wants

to restore the Ministry of Public Instruction, when the Government, through its leader, last session and at the previous session, has distinctly stated that it intends to do nothing of the kind. Of that ministry, as Mr. Bourassa was cruelly reminded at St. Hyacinthe, he was formerly a supporter. That question was, in fact, definitely dropped over eight years ago, during the session of 1899, after a speech which I made in the Legislative Assembly, at a time when it required some courage to do so before a hostile majority and when I alienated some friendships that were dear to me. Mr. Bourassa should have raised his voice then, when it would have been useful to do so. Then he could now concentrate his efforts upon something else than the solution of a problem which has been solved without and even against him.

What can be thought of Mr. Bourassa's good faith, when he affirms that the limit owners cut away all the timber below the diameter fixed by the regulations, that they lay the lots completely bare and that they do not leave the settler a single stick of timber to build with, nor even a rail to fence his lands. Can Mr. Bourassa specify such facts and furnish any proof of them? The enquiry of the Colonization Commission bore on this point. Mr. Bourassa personally followed its labors and he knows what its conclusions were. In all the colonization centres there are scores of mills exclusively supplied with timber taken from settlers' lots. To cite only one example, in the Metapedia Valley there are in addition to the limit holders' mills, twenty-five mills thus supplied by the settlers and putting upon the market millions of feet of lumber, beside pulpwood, and hundreds of thousands of railway ties. In any case, since the month of March, 1905—and I am speaking here from personal experience—notwithstanding the most active supervision, the strictest control, and the most searching enquiries, we have never been able to establish any serious infraction. Two or three of a trifling character have been noted, and they were immediately and severely punished.

ACCUSED OF SELLING FINEST WATER POWERS

What could be thought of the good faith of Mr. Bourassa when he accuses us of selling the finest water-powers in the province without examination, by private agreement, for a low price, and in our private offices? During the last two years three important water-powers have been sold and this by the

method advocated by Mr. Bourassa himself in his speech at the Drill Shed in Quebec in 1903, that is to say, that they were disposed of by emphyteutic lease and at public auction. I have the books before me to prove this. These powers were offered for sale on the condition that the lessees should, within the first five years of their lease, expend \$100,000, \$150,000 and \$500,000 respectively on their development. They were put up for sale after examination by one of the most competent men on the American continent, Mr. Gauvin, C.E. The only water-powers sold in this province by public auction have been sold by the present Government. Mr. Bourassa knows this, or should know it. A superficial knowledge of the facts is really the least that should be required from a man who aspires at the regeneration of his Province.

What could be thought of Mr. Bourassa's good faith when he asserts that the government is sacrificing our forest domain? Is he ignorant of the fact that the last sale dates back to June, 1906, that the Government has none this year, and that we have openly proclaimed our intention to sell no more in future. This announcement by the Prime Minister has been favorably received; but the conclusion should not be jumped at that our past policy on the subject has been bad or improvident. Whether in the Federal or in the Provincial field, I know of no public question in regard to which more errors, prejudices, and false information prevail than on that of leasing timber limits. The working of the law is well known. The Government advertises in the Official Gazette and the leading newspapers that, at a certain determinate time, it will offer for sale at public auction such and such limits. This law is not of yesterday, but dates back to Confederation. It was the work of a Conservative government, and was applied by all the Conservative administrations, but its best feature, that concerning the principle of publicity and of sale by public auction, has been inserted in the Statutes upon the representations and thanks to the efforts of the small Liberal minority in the Legislative Assembly in 1872-73.

But Mr. Bourassa and his friends claim that there is no real publicity, that the advertisements are insufficient; that intending purchasers have not time, during the thirty or sixty days given them, to properly ascertain the value of what is to be sold and that, consequently, there is no competition. This objection seems to have impressed those who are not in the timber trade or who have only a superfi-

cial knowledge of the matter. The last sale by the Government was in June, 1906, when about 10,000 square miles were advertised to be sold. Now, of what did those 10,000 square miles consist? In the first place, 7,000 of them were advertised for sale in June, 1905, and a certain proportion of these—a proportion which gradually decreases as one goes further back—had been advertised in previous years; so that the trade was in possession of accurate information—not for weeks or months—but for years and years regarding what was offered for sale. This argument applies equally to the new advertisements and to the old ones, since the former relate to adjacent limits, the natural prolongation of existing ones. I will show that the Breakey limits sold in 1905 were offered for sale in 1904, 1903, and even in 1902.

NEEDS OF THE TREASURY MUST BE CONSIDERED

Moreover, the needs of the Treasury had to be considered, the necessity of finding from \$300,000 to \$350,000 every year to meet wants and pressing obligations that could not be set aside.

The Government may have committed, and certainly has committed some errors in the past, for we are only human, but our adversaries have never ventured to accuse us of having been extravagant. The Liberal Government has administered the affairs of the Province with the strictest economy; and has guarded it against foolhardy ventures and schemes.

How was it possible to levy yearly the \$300,000 or \$350,000 that were absolutely needed for the administration of public business? The Government and the Legislature had to choose between direct taxation and the leasing of the public domain. They did not wish to tax the people and to retain the forest for a more or less lengthy period, while awaiting an eventual and always problematical increase in its value, for the best of calculations would be at fault were a substitute found for pulp-wood in the manufacture of paper, or were our forests destroyed by fire, as had too frequently been the case in the past. To our adversaries—to the adversaries of the Government, the Conservatives, I would further say that they themselves were the partisans, the first supporters of that policy and they leased the greater portion of our public domain at prices far below those obtained by the present administration. This has been proved on many occasions, but never so thoroughly as by the Premier recently at Chateaugay.

There is still more, however. The Government's policy would be a bad one if it could be defended solely by arguments "ad hominem." Our policy would be but one of expediency and of opportunism, if it could be defended solely by considerations connected with the Budget. The problem of the farming out of the public domain is a difficult and a complicated one, and it could not be solved by a dash of the pen or in a few words. I sincerely believe, however, that the manner in which the Government has solved it in the past is the only practical and, in any case, the only progressive one.

The objection has been raised that the forests are becoming more and more valuable. I am aware that the eventual high value of our forests is one article of the political creeds of many persons in good faith in the Province. It must not be forgotten, however, that it is the same with lumbering as with other industries; that it is liable to the hazards and risks of economic production. The value of the forests may increase, but it may also decrease. If the high prices that have ruled in past years are maintained it will be easy for the Government, in 1910, to increase the stumpage dues proportionately. If, on the other hand, prices fall, the country will be on the right side, and all the risks will be with the buyers. Moreover, after timber limits are sold, they are subject to a ground rent of \$3.00 per mile; this at the present time yields a yearly revenue of \$240,000, representing interest at 3 per cent. on \$8,000,000.

But, in my opinion, the greatest advantage of the farming out of the public domain lies in the protection it affords against illegal cutting and fires. In a single region, the county of Pontiac, the country lost by fire more pine timber than would have sufficed to pay off the public debt of the Province. Everybody is therefore interested in having the greater portion, at least the accessible portion, of our forest territory under license, so that the license-holders, whose entire fortune is frequently invested in the limits, may help the Government in providing protection against fire. Everybody is interested, I say, in obtaining the limit-holders' co-operation, especially since, under the new arrangements, the latter pay the whole expense of protection while the Government retains merely the supervision and control.

NECESSITY OF TURNING POWERS TO ADVANTAGE

A final argument in support of the Government's policy lies in the neces-

sity of turning our great water-powers to advantage. A glance at what has been done at Grand'Mere and Shawinigan and at what is at present being done at La Tuque, will show towns that have sprung up spontaneously under the impetus of that progressive policy.

While on the subject, I cannot avoid speaking of two sales which have been strongly criticized of late. Mr. Bourassa has said that, on the 30th June, 1904, I had sold a limit to Mr. Dupuis, the then member for Chateauguay. I ask you to note the date—the 30th June, 1904. It is a trifling detail, but as a matter of fact, I was not then Minister of Lands and Forests. In their fury against me, my adversaries do not take the most elementary precautions against making themselves ridiculous. However, I was a member of the Government at the time, and I do not seek to shirk my responsibility. The sale to Mr. Dupuis has been made regularly and according to law at a public auction. Mr. Parent could not have refused Mr. Dupuis' bids, even if he had wanted, because public auctions are open to all and there can be no discrimination against anybody. Mr. Dupuis could also have used a borrowed name, as is done by the representatives of large firms, which do not wish to excite competition. That Dupuis story is ridiculous from beginning to end, and would even have seemed incredible, had not Mr. Bourassa, following in Mr. Leblanc's footsteps, invented the phantasmagoric scandal of the Breakey limits. The accusation has been reported four weeks previously in Mr. Bourassa's organ, *La Patrie*, and has never been denied or corrected by that gentleman. The charge has been made in the following words:

"In the month of June, 1905, another sale of limits took place in Quebec, and two citizens of Shawinigan who wanted to buy limits proceeded there. On their arrival in Quebec they went to Mr. Turgeon and offered him from \$250 to \$350 for a certain portion of the limits in question. Mr. Turgeon received them very politely and told them to wait.

"The auction took place on the following day. Mr. Turgeon began by putting the upset price at \$400. The two gentlemen could not go so high and nobody would bid.

"The sale was adjourned at half-past eleven o'clock. Mr. Turgeon went with Mr. Breakey, a speculator on a large scale, to lunch at the Garrison Club, and on his return he announced that he had decided to sell the whole in a lump, and he put the upset price at

\$100. Mr. Breakey bid \$105 and got all the limits at that figure. The two gentlemen who had offered from \$250 to \$350 for the area they wanted to buy, were thus cut out by Mr. Breakey.

"The latter paid the amount by notes and eight months afterwards he sold those limits to the Burgess Sulphide Company, of Berlin Falls, with a profit of \$695,000.

"We say that such a policy, whatever may be the color of the party which follows it, is a policy of theft and extravagance."

SUCH AN ACCUSATION IS FALSE AND LYING

That accusation is a false and lying one from the first word to the last. Fortunately the minutes of the auction sales have been kept in the Crown Lands Department, and two letters drafted by Mr. Paul Blouin, the superintendent of the Woods and Forests Branch, and signed by Mr. E. E. Tache, the Deputy Minister of Crown Lands, dispose of the charge.

"Quebec, 28th August, 1907.

"Hon. Adelard Turgeon, Minister of Lands and Forests, Quebec.

"Sir,—In answer to your verbal request, I have the honor to give you the following information:

"The limits: Manouan River, 1, 2 and 3 north, and 1, 2 and 3 south, and Upper St. Maurice, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 32, 33 and 34, adjudged to Mr. John Breakey at the auction sale in June, 1905, had already been put up for sale at the auctions of the 3rd June, 1902, 16th June, 1903, and 22nd June, 1904, without finding any buyers.

"At the auction of the 3rd June, 1902, the limit, Manouan river, 1 north, was offered for sale at an upset price of \$60 per mile; the limits, Manouan river, 2 and 3 north, and 1, 2 and 3 south, were offered at an upset price of \$55 per mile; the Upper St. Maurice limits, 9, 10, 11 and 12, were offered at an upset price of \$100 per mile, but no bidder came forward.

"At the auction sale in the morning of the 22nd June, 1905, the same limits were offered at an upset price of \$125 a mile, and no bidder came forward. In the afternoon they were again offered at an upset price of \$100 a mile, and adjudged to Mr. Breakey at \$105 mile.

"E. E. TACHE,

"Deputy Minister."

"Quebec, 30th August, 1907.

"Hon. Rodolphe Roy, Provincial Secretary, Quebec.

"Sir,—I have the honor to reply to your letter of the 28th instant as follows:

"1. The following limits on the St. Maurice were offered for sale at the auction of the 22nd June, 1905, viz.: Manouan, 1, 2 and 3 north; 1, 2, 3, 8 and 9 south; Upper St. Maurice, Nos. 9 to 34 inclusively.

"2. Those limits were put up in separate blocks.

"3. Those limits were advertised for sale according to law, previous to the date fixed for the auction, viz.: from the 13th May, 1905.

"4. They had previously been inspected by officers of the Department to ascertain their value.

"5. In the morning of the auction sale on the 22nd June, 1905, there were no bidders for any of the said blocks, of which the following were offered at an upset price of \$125 a mile:

"Manouan 1, 2 and 3 north; 1, 2, 3, 8 and 9 south; Upper St. Maurice Nos. 9 to 12. This was the only upset price.

"6. In the afternoon the auction sale was continued at about 2 o'clock, and there were a good many persons present that afternoon.

"7. Those limits had been previously put up at auction viz.: on the 3rd June, 1902; on the 16th June, 1903, and on the 22nd June, 1904, after notice duly given according to law, dating from the 19th April, 1902, the 9th May, 1903, and the 21st May, 1904, respectively.

"I have the honor to be, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

E. E. TACHE,

"Deputy Minister."

These letters prove conclusively that the limits in question had been for sale for three years; that there had been no bidder at \$60 or even at \$55; that in the month of June, 1905, they were put up in separate blocks at \$125 and not at \$400, as stated by Mr. Bourassa. Where then were the two gentlemen from Shawinigan who were prepared to pay as high as \$350?

Mr. Bourassa has given it to be understood that, at a lunch at the Garri-son Club I have sacrificed the public domain to a speculator. On his return to Quebec, Mr. Breakey had written the following letter to the press:

"Chaudiere Mills.

"Sept. 2nd, 1907.

"On my return from an extended

visit to the United States, my attention was called to reports of speeches in the Montreal Star and La Patrie, made by Mr. Bourassa, M.P., in which he is reported as having said, that "when, as one of the syndicate, I bought limits at a public sale in June, 1905, I had, before the sale, lunch at the Garrison Club with the Hon. Mr. Turgeon, Minister of Lands, Forests and Fisheries." I never breakfasted, lunched, dined or supped with the Hon. Mr. Turgeon at the Garrison Club, or any other place, then, before, or since.

"(Signed) JOHN BREAKEY."

It is not true that Mr. Breakey has resold the limits at a profit of \$695,000. From information I have obtained, and which I have every reason to believe accurate, the Burgess Sulphide Company have bought, not for \$800,000 nor anything like that amount, but for \$300,000, not only Mr. Breakey's limits, but also the Tuque water power for which \$50,000 had been paid, the land subsidy granted the Quebec & Lake St. John Railway for the Tuque branch, and also a special tariff of rates over the line of that railway for the conveyance of their freight. Where could Mr. Bourassa have got hold of that odious calumny?

DISSEMINATES CALUMNY THROUGHOUT PROVINCE

As to the Mullarkey case, I declare that I have no personal acquaintance with Mr. Mullarkey, and never had any dealings with him in any connection. The rumors to the contrary are malicious lies, and I take this opportunity of so branding them. So is the statement that Mr. Mullarkey's note was accepted without any interest being charged. I have a letter stating that Mr. Mullarkey's note has borne interest at the rate of 6 per cent., and that this interest has been promptly paid when due.

Proceeding, the Minister of Lands and Forests went over a good deal of the ground covered in his speech at St. Michel de Bellechasse, taking up the Prevost-Asselin case, and showing how he had been exonerated by both the Judge and by Mr. Laflamme, only to be reviled by Mr. Bourassa. With intense feeling and eloquent phrase, he discussed the charges of the member for Labelle, and declared that they were one and all to be cast aside, for they were all proved false out of the official records. What more did any one worthy of the name need? Mr. Laflamme had said he was going to Belgium to hunt up evidence against him (Mr. Turgeon). "Mr.

Laflamme can go to Belgium and get all the evidence he can unearth," declared the speaker, "but I defy him to find anywhere a single line that will prove that what I have stated here is not true. I defy him to obtain a single vestige of proof that any of the base, trumped up charges of Mr. Bourassa and his associates are anything else but false. And yet this man flings these odious calumnies at me from every public platform upon which he can get up and obtain a hearing.

He claims to be a Liberal, yet without asking for a word of explanation from me, or seeking for information at its source, he has attacked my honor as a citizen and my reputation as a public man, and has disseminated this calumny throughout the Province. I denied it, and I now bring forward documentary evidence to disprove it; and if Mr. Bourassa thinks to escape my legitimate indignation by remaining silent or by indulging in fresh insults, he is very much in error.

I have been patient for some months and can still remain so, but I am also persevering, and I will protect the only thing that remains to me after having been a Minister for ten years—the honor of my name and the integrity of my reputation. Reputation is a very hard thing to defend at the present time. An irresponsible newspaper in Montreal, edited by men of straw, has pushed its boldness so far as to accuse me of perjury. The charge is frivolous on its very face, and there is not a shadow of justification for it. It has been repeated in five consecutive issues of the paper. I took an action for damages at the beginning of August, and now, after six weeks, it has not even filed its plea; every means has been taken to delay the progress and trial of the suit. Meanwhile Mr. Bourassa is cracking jokes respecting the comparatively small amount of damages claimed. But I am not so simple as to strive to get money of Le Nationaliste, and the writer who has written under the fictitious name of Pierre Beaudry, has not been manly enough to remove his mask. I do not want money, but what I do want, and what I will have, in spite of the lawyer's skill, is a judicial inquiry, for that is the only way to obtain enlightenment and rehabilitation, as well as the branding of Le Nationaliste and its prompters.

One of the things which Mr. Bourassa deplures with the greatest oratorical efforts, is stagnation in colonization, but fortunately he has discovered the root of the evil and has indicated the remedy. What are the causes of such stagnation, which after all exists only

in his imagination? The law does not enforce residence on the settler, and the settler is not free on a free lot. It might be said at once that the law requires residence, but, in practice, the Minister exercises a wise discretion. If residence were strictly enforced, the son of the small farmer—the only man who really carries on colonization in the Province—would become powerless. If he were compelled to build a house at once and to live in it, one might as well open wide the doors leading to foreign countries. On the contrary, if he continues to live at home where his expenses will be less, he can work at his clearings while helping to till the paternal homestead.

IT WOULD PUT AN END TO ALL COLONIZATION

But Mr. Bourassa had said in a great outburst of oratory: "I want the land to be free to the free settler; I want the timber to belong to the settler to enable him to live while clearing the land." Such a doctrine is the most contemptible of all demagogic appeals. It would mean that the settler would become the owner of the timber before he had established his good faith; it would put an end to colonization in the Province and would soon exhaust our forests. The settler already owns the timber on his lot; he can, and does, sell it without paying Government dues; only—and this is a wise restriction—he cannot cut down timber outside his clearing until he has cleared ten acres out of a hundred, built a house and established his residence there; in other words until he has clearly proved his good faith.

Those who occupy themselves with the settlement of public lands know that there are two classes of settlers; the good and the bad; the real and the bogus. If that wise restriction of the law were removed, if, as soon as the location ticket is issued, the settler became the owner of the timber, there would be no more settlers but merely lumber merchants. So long as human nature remains what it is, no one will endure the privations and perform the labor required in clearing forest land, when one can, right alongside and with less work, realize \$5, \$10 or \$15 a day. If the settler became at once the owner of the lot, he would cut down the merchantable timber, and when the lot was swept bare, he would begin over again somewhere else.

This would mean the rapid destruction of our forests, and how then could the hundreds of thousand dollars of revenue needed every year be made

up? Moreover, the rights of the license holders have to be respected; otherwise we should have expropriation without compensation, which means spoliation. Our law is a wise and far-seeing one; it is based on the experience of years. It should not be imagined that all the men who have succeeded one another in the Crown Lands Department for a hundred years, under Conservative as well as under Liberal regimes, were all knaves or fools. If one would but consult those who are still living, whether Liberals, like Mr. Parent, or Conservatives, like Messrs. Flynn, Nantel and Lynch, all would give the same answer based on their experience, business practice and the knowledge acquired through daily contact with men and things.

The same inexperience, the same fanciful ideas manifest themselves in another reform advocated by Mr. Bourassa and it is advisable to warn the public against it. This is that license-holders should be compelled to work their limits. He has been careful, however, not to say how nor to what extent, but has contented himself with vague statements, being probably under the impression that he is the first to whom the idea had occurred, and that it had never occupied the attention of the legislator. Now, in 1851, or 56 years ago, the Crown Lands Department of the former Province of Canada adopted a regulation with the view of reaching those who did not work their limits. At first they were obliged to cut one hundred saw logs for every square mile; then in 1866, the ground rent on limits where no lumbering was carried on was raised to twenty-three shillings and four pence, or a little less than \$5 per mile. In 1868 the old regulations were repealed, a uniform ground rent was imposed and it was realized that it would be absurd to force lumbering operations by legislation inasmuch as they, like all others of an economic nature, are governed by the law of supply and demand. Owners of limits are interested in working their limits when business is good, and legislation is not needed to urge people to make money. At present upset prices, the purchase of timber limits is very costly, amounting to \$50,000, \$100,000 or even \$200,000. In addition to the interest on the price of sale there is the ground rent of \$3.00 per mile, the cost of fire protection, and the ever present and frequently possible risk of destruction by fire.

LIMIT HOLDERS DESIRE TO REALIZE PROFITS

For all those reasons, limit-holders

have but one desire, and that is to work their limits so as to get back their money, pay the general expenses, and realize profits. But in the lumber trade, as in all others, there are good times and bad times, periods when prices are high and periods of depression. Many fortunes are lost in lumbering. When the lumber trade pays, those who are interested in it. But no legislation is needed to urge on those who are interested in it. But it would be disastrous, ridiculous, foolish and dishonest to order people to carry it on at a loss. In any case, does Mr. Bourassa want such legislation to have a retroactive effect? The answer is obvious.

I do not, however, wish you to think that all the portions of Mr. Bourassa's speech resemble one another and that it contains only audacious and untrue statements, as in the Breakey affair, or ridiculous projects, such as the compulsory working of timber limits. It contains some excellent things. It preaches sound doctrines and advocates the most commendable reforms, such as the classification of public lands, the establishment of public of colonization and forest reserves to protect the sources of water supply and secure the perpetuity of our water-powers. All this is, indeed, excellent, and haste should be made to carry out all those excellent reforms—unless it has already been done. Where can Mr. Bourassa have lived in past years? What dreams can have filled his mind, to prevent his seeing the work that has been quietly done by the Government?

Mr. Bourassa wants the townships classified. Is he ignorant of the fact that such classification is already accomplished fact in fifty-three townships and is being finished in many others? Mr. Bourassa wants to improve our educational system by establishing academies side by side with the elementary and mode schools. Is he ignorant of the fact that, according to official statistics, there were in the Province last year over two hundred academies attended by more than 30,000 pupils? Mr. Bourassa wants the creation of colonization reserves. Is

he not aware that of late years the Government has established several, including the Gouin road reserve, in the basin of the Lievre; the Peribonka reserve, at Lake St. John; the Sayabec reserve, at Matane, in Metapedia; the Mercier road reserve in Bonaventure; and the Rolette Township reserve in Montmagny. The Government are also organizing colonization centres at Lac des Isles, Temiscamingue, Matawan, and in the townships of Packington and Robinson in Temiscouata.

Mr. Bourassa wants the establishment of forest reserves. In 1906 there was not a single one in the Province of Quebec, for the Laurentides National Park is more a fish and game reserve. The matter at once attracted my attention and in two years the Government has created the following reserves:

Gaspé reserve, 2523 1-3 square miles;
Rimouski reserve, 1249 2-3 square miles;
Chaudière reserve, 156 square miles;
Temiscouata reserve, 227 square miles;
Bonaventure reserve, 1733 square miles;
Saguenay and Labrador reserve, 110,000 square miles; Barachois reserve, 113 square miles; St. Maurice reserve, 21,121 square miles; Ottawa reserve, 27,652 square miles; Rivière Ouelle reserve, 340 square miles. Total, 165,115 square miles.

"This, with the National Park, constitutes a total area of 107,767,253 acres. From the standpoint of forest reserves, this province is far ahead of all the others. (Ontario has only 11,728,000 acres), and leads the whole American continent. The area of forest reserves in the Province of Quebec is greater than all the states of the American Union."

Mr. Turgeon concluded by stigmatizing the campaign of defamation carried on against him as a shameful one, and assured his hearers that in the district of Quebec the good sense of the people had enabled them to see through the manoeuvres of the Nationalist party, consisting of a half-dozen disappointed politicians and disgruntled office-seekers.

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